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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-fifth session
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Agenda item 8

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 6. Legal activities

1. At its 27th meeting, on 6 June 1995, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 6, Legal activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Some delegations welcomed the significant reduction in the level of resources proposed for legal activities. Others felt that the reduction was more related to the completion of a number of activities than to increased efficiency.

3. A number of delegations considered that the proposed reduction in resources would not adversely affect the effectiveness of the Office of Legal Affairs. Other delegations emphasized that additional tasks assigned to the Office resulting from peace-keeping activities should be taken into account in that context.

4. One delegation expressed disappointment that efforts to convert the United Nations Treaty Information System database to CD-ROM had been unsuccessful. Further efforts to complete the computerization of the system during 1996-1997 were supported by a number of delegations, who anticipated that it would prove cost-effective and produce significant savings in the future.

5. One delegation suggested that consideration be given within the programme of work of the Office to providing assistance on legal issues related to peace-keeping operations to Member States with limited experience in the area.

6. Some delegations expressed concern about the excessive orientation of the workload towards peace-keeping activities, given that the Office had a very important role to play in other areas of United Nations activities.

7. The same delegations emphasized the importance of effective coordination between the Office of Legal Affairs and other departments and offices, and expressed concern that the reduction for external printing might adversely affect the availability of important publications, including the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs.

8. Several delegations emphasized the importance of programme 2, Law of the sea and ocean affairs, with the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1994, and expressed concern as to whether the proposed level of resources would be sufficient to provide for the activities under the programme.

9. One delegation expressed support for completion of the draft code of crimes against peace and the security of mankind during 1996-1997.

10. One delegation questioned the use of the term "reform States" in paragraph 6.62.1 (a).

Conclusions and recommendations

11. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 6, Legal activities, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.